

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**Fish and Wildlife Service****Receipt of a Permit Application (LCRA) for Incidental Take of the Houston Toad**

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: The Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) has applied for an incidental take permit (TE-046500-0) pursuant to section 10(a) of the Endangered Species Act (Act). The requested permit would authorize the incidental take of the endangered Houston toad. The proposed take would occur as a result of the construction and operation of three wastewater lift stations and associated wastewater force mains in the Tahitian Village Subdivision in Bastrop County, Texas.

DATES: Written comments on the application should be received within 30 days of the date of this publication.

ADDRESSES: Persons wishing to review the application may obtain a copy by writing to the Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 1306, Room 4102, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87103. Person wishing to review the EA/HCP may obtain a copy by contacting Clayton Napier, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 10711 Burnet Road, Suite 200, Austin, Texas 78758 (512/490-0057). Documents will be available for public inspection by written request, by appointment only, during normal business hours (8 to 4:30) at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Austin, Texas. Written data or comments concerning the application and EA/HCP should be submitted to the Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Austin, Texas, at the above address. Please refer to permit number TE-046500-0 when submitting comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Clayton Napier at the above U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Austin Office.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 9 of the Act prohibits the "taking" of endangered species such as the Houston toad. However, the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), under limited circumstances, may issue permits to take endangered wildlife species incidental to, and not the purpose of, otherwise lawful activities. Regulations governing permits for endangered species are at 50 CFR 17.22.

The Service has prepared the Environmental Assessment/Habitat Conservation Plan (EA/HCP) for the

incidental take application. A determination of jeopardy to the species or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will not be made until at least 30 days from the date of publication of this notice. This notice is provided pursuant to section 10(c) of the Act and National Environmental Policy Act regulations (40 CFR 1506.6).

Applicant: The LCRA plans to construct three wastewater lift stations and associated wastewater force mains in the Tahitian Village Subdivision in Bastrop County, Texas. This action will eliminate 0.6 acres or less of Houston toad habitat. The LCRA proposes to compensate for this incidental take of the Houston toad by providing \$1,656.00 to the Houston Toad Conservation Fund at the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for the specific purpose of land acquisition and management within Houston toad habitat.

Steven M. Chambers,

Acting Regional Director, Region 2.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**National Park Service****Record of Decision; Final Fort Bowie General Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement; Fort Bowie National Historic Site, Arizona**

The Department of the Interior, National Park Service has prepared this Record of Decision on the General Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement for Fort Bowie National Historic Site. This Record of Decision includes a description of the background of the project, a statement of the decision made, synopses of other alternatives considered, the basis for the decision, findings on impairment of park resources and values, a description of the environmentally preferable alternative, a listing of measures to minimize environmental harm, and an overview of public and agency involvement in the decision-making process.

Background of the Project

A comprehensive general management plan (GMP) is needed to manage resources and guide development and use. The master plan approved for Fort Bowie in 1975 is outdated and inadequate to deal with the variety of issues facing the historic site.

The purpose of the new GMP is to decide what kinds of resource conditions and visitor experiences should ultimately be achieved and maintained throughout the historic site. The process started in early May 1998 and involved joint scoping for GMPs for both Fort Bowie NM and Fort Bowie NHS. A newsletter invited the public to attend meetings to discuss both plans. Notices of the public meetings were also sent to nearby newspapers. Four meetings were held the week of May 18th in the towns of Portal, Willcox, and Bowie, and at a school just outside of Fort Bowie NM. A total of 19 people attended the meetings. The GMP process was described at each meeting, as were the two parks. There was general appreciation expressed for the parks, and recommendations were made not to change them. All suggestions were discussed and notes were taken. Another 24 mailed responses were received from newsletter readers. In addition to the newsletter, letters were also sent to three Apache tribes (White Mountain, San Carlos and Tonto), the Yavapai Tribe, Mohave Tribe and one nation (Mescalero) in Arizona, New Mexico, and Oklahoma, and to two interested individuals (American Indians). No responses were received.

A Notice of Intent to publish an Environmental Impact Statement was published in the **Federal Register** in June of 1999. A 30-day public comment period followed ending on July 15, 1999. A Web site (<http://www.nps.gov/planning/fobo>) was established to facilitate making information about the planning process available to the public. A total of 5 responses were received requesting information on the planning process. Groups included one organization interested in land issues, one interested in handicapped accessibility, and two unaffiliated individuals.

The purpose of the Fort Bowie General Management Plan is to present a comprehensive management plan and guide the management of the Fort Bowie National Historic Site for the next 12 to 15 years. Two alternatives were considered—a no-action and the park proposal. The proposed general management plan for the Fort Bowie National Historical Site continues the concept established—the principle of a very low level of development, intended to allow the visitor a "discovery" experience in a place of "historic abandonment." Alternatives A (the NPS Proposal) recognizes that the current level of development, interpretation, and the pattern of visitor use with some minor modifications are appropriate for Fort Bowie and would be maintained.